

## **GLOBAL DONORS AND TOP AID OFFICIALS GATHER VIRTUALLY FOR YEMEN PLEDGING EVENT**

RIYADH – SAUDI ARABIA (31 May 2020) The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is set to become the largest consistent donor to Yemen during the upcoming High-Level Pledging Event for the Humanitarian Crisis in Yemen on Tuesday, 2 June 2020. The Pledging Event for the United Nations' Yemen Humanitarian Response Plan is being hosted virtually by the Kingdom in partnership with the United Nations. A total of USD 2.3 billion is being sought to cover emergency requirements in Yemen across multiple humanitarian sectors, including medical, food and shelter assistance.

The event is the first virtual initiative of its kind to be held on this scale, and will be attended by top Saudi Arabian and United Nations officials. Among the high-level attendees will be His Royal Highness Faisal Bin Farhan, Saudi Arabia's Minister of Foreign Affairs, António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations, Dr. Abdullah Al Rabeeah, Advisor – Royal Court and Supervisor General of King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre (KSrelief), and Mr. Mark Lowcock, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator (OCHA). The event will take place from 8:00-13:40 EDT (New York).

Saudi Arabia hopes to attract significant pledges to finance the 2020 Emergency Humanitarian Response Plan to bring relief to the estimated 24.3 million people in Yemen who are currently in acute need. The United Nations has taken the unusual step of extending the implementation period of the existing plan from this June until the end of December 2020 in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Yemen has been the number one humanitarian priority for Saudi Arabia and KSrelief," said Dr. Abdullah Al Rabeeah, Supervisor General of KSrelief. "COVID-19 has created new needs there, but is just the latest challenge in an already deteriorating situation. Yemen needs a lot of help, not least because of its weak health system. Saudi Arabia, through its strong partnership with the United Nations organizations, is determined to continue to help the Yemeni people, as it has consistently done since 2015."

KSrelief provides impartial and independent assistance to Yemen and other countries. To date, 60-70% of the Kingdom's Yemen assistance has been channeled through the United Nations, always in line with the basic humanitarian principles of impartiality and independence from economic, political, military or religious considerations.

The Kingdom's ongoing assistance to Yemen is in line with its long history of commitment towards meeting the needs of the country; over the last 5 years, Saudi Arabia has provided nearly USD 17 billion in aid to Yemen, including humanitarian and development aid, support to the Central Bank of Yemen and comprehensive assistance to Yemenis living in the Kingdom. In 2019, Saudi Arabia was the top donor country to Yemen, with contributions totaling USD 1.25 billion, or 31.1% of the total amount sought by the United Nations. Since May of 2015, KSrelief and 88 humanitarian

partners have implemented 474 projects across 12 humanitarian sectors, aid totaling USD 3 billion.

On COVID-19, Saudi Arabia has established a strategic plan to help countries and regions most in need. Yemen has one of the most fragile healthcare systems on the planet, and at the start of the pandemic, the Ministry of Health of Yemen received immediate support from the Kingdom through capacity-building, funding, and the provision of protective equipment and diagnostic supplies. KSrelief has also worked with many international NGOs and non-UN partners to prevent the global spread of the pandemic.

Both KSrelief and the United Nations are hopeful that this important event will result in pledges from donor countries to provide the urgent funding that is so crucial to alleviating the suffering of all Yemenis in need.

- Ends -

Note to editors:

The 2020 High-level Pledging Event was due to be hosted in Saudi Arabia several months ago, but was delayed due to the outbreak of COVID-19. We encourage all media organizations to join the event virtually.

- To join the event, please register at <https://www.unocha.org/yemen2020>
- To request interviews with HE Dr. Abdullah Al Rabeeah, Supervisor General of KSrelief, contact Alaa Alghamdi (WhatsApp: +966 507032777 – Email: [a.d.alghamdi@ksrelief.org](mailto:a.d.alghamdi@ksrelief.org))
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